(a) if so, the salient features of the policy;

(b) whether specific provisions are proposed to be incorporated for bringing legislation to protect cultural heritage sites and properties; and

(c) if so. the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI J AGMOHAN): (a) to (d) No formal policy document has been formulated. However, the 'mission[1] of the Government is to preserve and promote all forms of art. culture and heritage and protect and conserve the protected monuments. A number of Academies - Sangeet Natak, Lalit Kala and Sahitya - have been constituted, and there is also a National School of Drama.

Financial assistance to Travancore Devasom Board, Kerala

4142. SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(b) whether any proposal has been received from the Kerala Government to declare Sabarimala as a natural centre of pilgrimage;

(c) whether Government have taken any decision in this regard;

(d) whether any proposal seeking Central aid to improve the pilgrim tourism has been received from the Travancore Devasom Board; and

(e) whether Government are considering to extend the financial assistance to the above project?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI J AGMOHAN): (a) A proposal has been received for declaring Sabarimala as National Pilgrim Centre.

(a) There is no practice to declare a place as natural/national centre of pilgrimage.

(b) Yes. Sir.

(d) Development and promotion of tourist places/centres is the responsibility of the State Government/UT Administrations themselves. However, the Department of Tourism provides Central Financial assistance on the basis of project proposals received from them for integrated development of tourist circuits, product/infrastructure development of destination, rural tourism, etc.

During the year 2002-2003, a sum of Rs. 780.36 lakhs has been sanctioned for development of Southern Circuit in Kerala. The State Government has been requested to offer their comments on the project of Travancore Devasom Board.

Aerospace Museum in Bangalore

4143. SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased lo state:

(b) which are the new galleries added to the Visveswariah Industrial and Technological Museum. Bangalore since 2000 till date;

(c) whether it has come to the notice of Government that Hindustan Aeronautics Limited has opened an Aerospace Museum in Bangalore; and

(d) whether Government propose to take steps to exhibit the models/pictures etc.. of Aerospace Museum at VITM by taking up the matter with the HAL authorities to facilitate visitors to seethe developments in Aerospace a'l one place?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI J AGMOHAN): (a) A gallery titled "Space Emerging Technology in the Service of Mankind" with a floor area of 7000sq. metres was opened in Visveswariah Industrial and Technological Museum (VITM) on 19th June 1999. One Dinosaur corner was opened on 15th December 2001 and a "Bio-Technological Revolution" gallery with a covered area of 500 sq. metres was added to the Museum on 4th January 2003.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) VITM already has one gallery titled "Space Emerging Technology in the Service of Mankind" which was opened in June 1999. The gallery depicts Indian achievements in space technology and some basic principles of aviation. Due to. space constraints, it will not be possible for VITM to display more xhibits and models.

Financial assistance to voluntary organisations in Gujarat

4144. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will theMinister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government provide financial assistance to voluntary organisations engaged in preservation and promotion of Tribal Culture in the country;